

THE GULL



GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER VOL. 87 NO. 10 DECEMBER 2002

FOUNDED 1917

A National Award for Arthur Feinstein

by Nancy Smith

Arthur Feinstein, Golden Gate Audubon's Executive Director, has been named one of thirty "national heroes" by The Clean Water Network for his "significant contributions to protecting and restoring wetlands and coastal waters."

The Clean Water Network, an alliance of over 1,000 environmental organizations nationwide, honored "Thirty Heroes for Thirty Years of the Clean Water Act" this fall to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Act. Besides Arthur, the thirty include Senator Barbara Boxer, several U.S. congressmen (both Democrats and Republicans), Wendell Berry, Pete Seeger, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., and other engaged citizens across the country.

Arthur has focused on wetlands, and the wildlife dependent on them, since he joined Golden Gate Audubon in the 1980s. His dedicated efforts have led to important victories for San Francisco Bay wetlands and federal wetlands regulation. We cite just two examples:

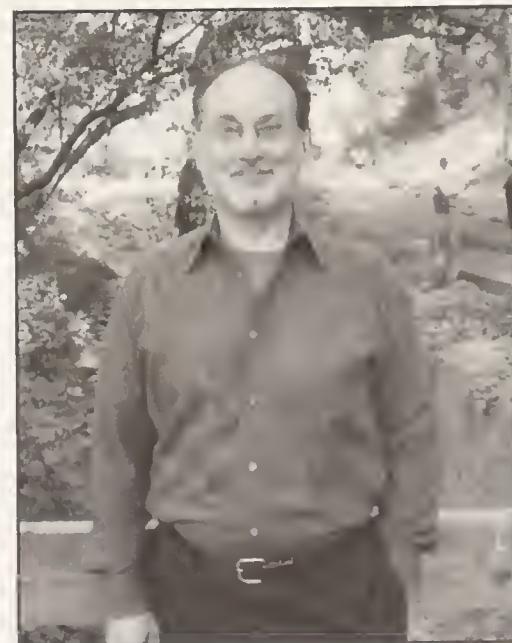
- Over 70 acres of wetlands at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline Park in Oakland, and over 400 acres of wetlands at the Oakland Airport, were threatened with destruction until GGAS, under Arthur's lead, sued and won protection for both. The lawsuit also resulted in restoration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Park wetlands. Of those wetlands, Arthur has said: "The bird life is just incredible – there

are thousands of shorebirds and waterfowl, and endangered species like the California Clapper Rail and the California Least Tern."

- Arthur was a co-founder of the "Campaign to Save California Wetlands" to rally grassroots opposition to congressional efforts in the early 90s to weaken federal wetlands protection. Arthur notes that the Clean Water Act has helped slow the rate of wetlands loss nationwide, but he believes that lax enforcement and renewed efforts to weaken the Act may undermine the gains.

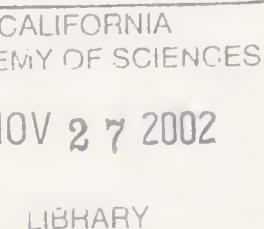
"Arthur's tenacity has resulted in many acres of wetlands being restored and protected in San Francisco Bay. He's a true advocate for the program and he deserves this honor," said Loretta K. Barsamian, Executive Officer of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Arthur's knowledge of wetlands and wetlands regulations, as well as his tenacity, have led to his success and earned the respect of his peers. And his commitment to wetlands protection continues. As GGAS Executive Director, he is working with the Yosemite Creek Watershed Restoration Group to involve San Francisco youth in wildlife studies, reviewing wetlands actions of the BCDC and the Army Corps of Engineers, and advocating protection of the Bay from impacts of dredging – among



Arthur Feinstein

Harriet Trezevant



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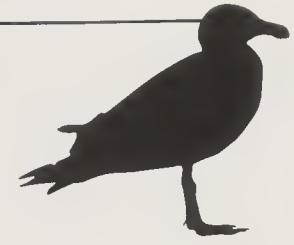
Office Hours: Tuesday – Friday 9–12, 1–4 (please call first)

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FIELD TRIPS

Susan Groves



Strybing Arboretum,

San Francisco

Sundays, December 1, January 5

Meet at 8 a.m. at the front gate of the Arboretum (9th Ave. and Lincoln Way) for this regular first Sunday of the month half-day trip. Strybing Arboretum is a delightful section of Golden Gate Park, with several "micro-habitats" attracting a varied array of resident, migrant and vagrant birds. Beginners and all others welcome. GGAS co-leaders: Allan Ridley, Rick Ferrick. Strybing Arboretum Docents: Helen McKenna, Linda Lyons. 415.566.3241.

Redwood Regional Park,

Oakland

Sunday, December 1

We will be seeking resident and wintering landbirds in riparian, redwood and coastal scrub habitats. We will meet at 8 a.m. in the last parking lot. Take Hwy. 13 to Redwood Road exit. Go east (toward the hills) on Redwood Rd. for 3 miles to park entrance on left. Leader: Rusty Scalf 510.666.9936; rscalf@jps.net.

Upper San Leandro Reservoir, Moraga

Friday, December 6

Meet at 9 a.m. in the Valle Vista Staging Area for this half-day trip. Grassy hills, pines, oaks and open water provide varied habitats for land birds (mainly woodpeckers) and waterfowl. Take Hwy. 24 to Orinda and exit on Moraga Hwy. Continue approximately 4 miles to Canyon Road. Turn right at

the traffic signal and continue 1.2 miles to the Valle Vista Staging Area on the left. Beginners welcome. Rain cancels. Leader: Bob Lewis 510.845.5001; RLewis0727@aol.com.

Monterey Bay &

Coastal Areas

Saturday, December 7

We will be looking for loons, grebes, gulls, alcids and rocky coastline species. Meet at 9 a.m. in Monterey at the foot of the Coast Guard Pier at the southeast end of Cannery Row. Bring quarters for parking. We will bird this area then drive north, stopping at various spots including Moss Landing. Beginners welcome. Bring lunch and a scope if you have one. Leader: Don Starks 408.266.2969 (eves) (*).

Arrowhead Marsh,

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Regional Shoreline Park

Sunday, December 8

Meet at 9:30 a.m. for this 3-hour trip. Take I-880 to Hegenberger Rd. exit. Drive west about a half mile. Just past Leet Drive, turn right into a small parking lot just after you cross over the estuary. Leader: Jeffrey Black 510.525.7068.

Aquatic Park,

San Francisco

Sunday, December 8

Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the foot of the Hyde Street Pier (Hyde & Jefferson) for this beginners bird walk. Discover birds next door to the urban environment. San Francisco Maritime National His-

torical Park Ranger Carol Kiser will lead this approximately 2-hour walk. Dress in layers. Trip is wheelchair accessible. 415.561.7100 or 561.7104.

Biking and Birding the East Bay Shoreline Saturday, December 14

We'll bike from Berkeley to Richmond along the paved multi-use Bay Trail, stopping to view wintering ducks and shorebirds along the way. Round trip is about 15 flat miles. Helmets required. Trip ends by 12:30 p.m. Meet at 9 a.m. at the former Albany Middle School at the corner of Buchanan and Jackson Streets, one block west of San Pablo Ave. Leader: Jeffrey Black 510.526.7068.



Photo by Lee Karney

Long Billed Dowitcher at Lake Merced, San Francisco.

Gray Lodge & Sacramento Wildlife Refuges Saturday and Sunday, December 14 & 15

We will be looking for wintering geese (four species), Tundra Swans, a variety of ducks, raptors and Sandhill Cranes. For this two-day trip, meet on Saturday at 9 a.m. in lot #14 at Gray Lodge. Drive east on I-80 15 miles beyond Davis to

Route 99 exit. Go north 52 miles on Route 99 to the town of Gridley. Turn left (west) on Colusa Hwy. and continue 5 miles to Pennington Rd. Turn left and follow signs to Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge. Proceed through the checking station (entrance fee) and continue to parking lot #14. We will caravan through Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge on Saturday, and then visit some other sites in Sutter County and Butte County, so make sure you have plenty of gasoline before arriving at Gray Lodge. On Sunday, we will meet at 9 a.m. in the visitors' parking lot at the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge (entrance fee). To get there from I-5 take the Princeton exit (the sign used to say Norman Road but now says something like Road 68) just north of the Glenn Co. line, and follow signs to the Refuge. Allow 2.5 hours driving time from the Bay Area. For accommodations, try the Blue Gum Willows Motel, the Best Western in Willows or Jean's Riverside Bed & Breakfast in Oroville. There is no lodge in Gray Lodge. Bring lunch, snacks, liquids, scopes and clothes appropriate for the Sacramento Valley in December (cold, with wind and rain always possible). Heavy rain cancels trip. You may join us for both days or just one day. Leaders: Steve and Renee Margolin 530.342.6476 (\$).

Oakland Christmas Bird Count

Sunday, December 15

Contact GGAS office at 510.843.2222; ggas@goldengateaudubon.org. See page 9 for details.

San Francisco Christmas Bird Count

Friday, December 27

Contact GGAS office (see above). See page 9 for details.

Palo Alto Baylands & Mountain View Shoreline Saturday, January 11

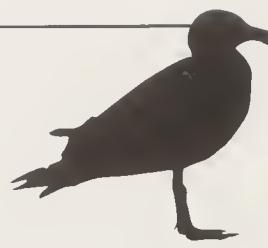
8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The wetlands, marshes and open waters at Palo Alto and Mountain View are among the most easily accessible sites for birders on San Francisco Bay. Levees and boardwalks overlooking the preserves make this an excellent spot to view 60 to 80 species which winter in the south bay. Ducks, shorebirds, waders, gulls, raptors and many more make this a most ideal birding experience. Meet at the duck pond near the Baylands Preserve. From Hwy. 101 in Palo Alto (just south of Dumbarton Bridge), exit at Embarcadero Rd. East. Stay to the right and be careful not to end up on the Oregon Expressway. Drive east over the freeway to the end of the street, turn left and continue to the duck pond on the left. We will meet in the parking lot immediately to the right of the gate (the gate itself is locked until 8 a.m.). Wear clothes appropriate for cold, wet weather. If it has been raining wear boots or waders since it can be quite muddy on the levees. Bring lunch and liquids. Restrooms may not be available before 1 p.m. Leader: Dan Murphy 415.564.0074. 

Trips marked with [\$] go to parks or other sites which require an entrance fee. Carpooling arrangements will be attempted by leader for trips marked with a [*].

If you need a ride or can take a passenger (even if a trip is not marked with an [*]), if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, if you have suggestions for trips, or if you are interested in leading a trip, call Susan Groves, Field Trips Committee Chair at 510.654.5954.

BACKYARD BIRDER

Meg Paletich



I have long admired photographers. My family snatches cameras from my hands in fear that I will once again waste film. For some reason I was able to record my children's lives until they became adults and then lost the ability to "push here, stupid" as cameras became simpler. Any thoughts of becoming a wildlife photographer, specializing in birds, in my declining years was shouted down by family members, who destroyed my confidence in that arena. When we were in Africa with our two children and their spouses 13 years ago, I was so glad that I could just sit back and enjoy the spectacle without squinting into a camera. I began to accumulate my own kind of scrapbook from which I can retrieve memories whenever I like. Too bad I can't share the sights—but I CAN describe some of them. These are from my scrapbook.

- Against the brightest blue California sky, a large flock of White Pelicans slowly wheels and circles ever higher, disappearing and then reappearing as the sun reflects off their white feathers.
- One night I step out on my deck and hear Great Horned Owls chatting. I am alone, so without embarrassment, I answer them. Soon I am "talking" to at least six owls in the hollow below me. Wonder what I was saying?
- On a crisp, frosty morning with another bright blue sky overhead, a flock of bright white Snow Geese
- with black-tipped wings honks from their v-shaped pattern.
- A Ruby-crowned Kinglet scolds me from a low shrub as he flares his crown so that I can enjoy the reason for his name.
- There are many "pictures" of large flocks of birds during winter in our valleys: Sand Hill Cranes, Tundra Swans, shore birds in fields, masses of egrets, Bald Eagles and Roadrunners all in the same day at Sacramento Wildlife Refuge. Near San Francisco Bay, a winter storm was gathering angry clouds with shafts of sunlight peeking through as the sky blackened with thousands of birds seeking safe refuge from the weather on the salt flats. I can imagine it was a sight the Ohlone Indians enjoyed years ago.
- A Western Screech Owl sought refuge in a bush in front of me, harrassed by an angry flock of jays and other birds who had joined the "mob." He clicked his beak at me, surprised that I was so close, and flew further from the gang of pursuers, leaving me delighted by such a close encounter.
- Strolling along a Sonoma County country road, my birding pal and I spot a bobcat lying in the morning sun in a cow pasture. We enjoyed the thrill of spying on this shy creature for 15 minutes or so before it became tired of us.



Western Screech Owl

plain. It is nearing dusk and they slowly rise and stretch while perusing the herd of impala below. Which one will be dinner? Somehow a plan is formulated: one hides behind a large shrub while the other strolls in plain view toward the herd. With perfect timing, the hunter charges one impala and drives it past his brother, who leaps on it and the two work together to take it down. They must kill and eat fast because they are the smallest of the cats and either a lion or hyenas steal away their meals.

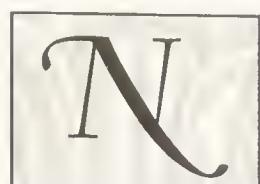
- Hearing calls of distress, I find a Scrub Jay has pinned down a Nuttall's Woodpecker on the patio. The jay flies away and I pick up the stunned woodpecker. Noticing a feather protruding from its bill, I tug and its tongue unfurls its full length, much to my amazement and surprise! After recovering its poise, it flies away.
- A pair of cheetahs, brothers, lie atop a flat rock above a grassy Kenyan



Snow Geese

Pier 94 Wetland Restoration

by Nancy Smith



Nature – with the help of hard-working GGAS volunteers – is reclaiming a hidden wetland, consisting of several acres of isolated industrial land near Pier 94 on San Francisco's southern waterfront. The wetland is evolving naturally as the fill material dumped there in the 1970s gradually subsides. Native salt marsh has formed along the shoreline and is attracting a variety of shorebirds. GGAS and the Port of San Francisco have joined in an effort to expand the wetland area and improve tidal circulation and public access.

GGAS began the hardcore cleanup on Earth Day in April 2002 when more than 60 volunteers removed 300 old tires, invasive plants (for composting), and scrap metal (for recycling) from the area. A second group returned on a foggy morning in August and hauled away over a half-ton of scrap metal,

several pickup truckfuls of star thistle, and more than a dozen old tires.

"We've made a great start," said Bob Bennett, GGAS volunteer leader, "but there is much more to be done." In addition to the Port, Sunset Scavenger Company and Hanson Aggregates Marine have co-sponsored GGAS's work at the site.

The wetland is not currently open to the public; access lies through Port properties leased to private tenants, mainly heavy industries. But on scheduled workdays, GGAS volunteers can explore this hidden tidal marsh and observe the returning bird life.

This fall we expect to plan further restoration efforts with the Port of San Francisco, including new plantings on site. If you would like to take part in the planning – or be added to the Pier 94 notice list – please call or email the GGAS office. Also watch the GGAS Web site for further developments. 



Two volunteers at the Pier 94 Wetland Restoration

- On our African adventure, we spent a half hour or so in our vehicle, engine off, completely surrounded by a herd of 50 or more elephants. We couldn't hear their amazingly soft foot steps but could hear stomachs rumbling, along with the very low sounds with which they seem to communicate with each other. The grass was green, the sky was blue and Mt. Kilimanjaro was RIGHT there!

- As we ate lunch at our hotel in Costa Rica, a huge troop of Capuchin monkeys entertained us, sliding down poles, swinging from trees and bouncing up and down on the roof's plastic surface. Then they were gone in an instant.

- The thrill of a good day at Hawk Hill overlooking the Golden Gate Bridge cannot be matched. How often can you see raptors from below AND from above?

- The African moon rose at dusk, an enormous blood orange red. Suddenly, a giraffe glides into view and is silhouetted against that vivid orb.

Of course, I have many more mental photographs, but you get the picture (no pun intended!). Perhaps many of you have similar photo albums. Get one out and have fun reminiscing. The picture is always in focus! 

A Bridge Between Social Justice and Environmental Education

by Amiko Mayeno

As a child, I dreamed of becoming a naturalist, but by the time I was in high school, I had long given up that dream in order to pursue my passion for social justice. Yet I always knew that my basic physical and spiritual well-being depended on regularly escaping into wilderness.

When I took the job as the East Bay Education Director for GGAS, I saw it as a nice short-term break from my community organizing and social justice related work. At my new job, I was responsible for working with a group of dedicated volunteers to administer an existing project in Alameda and develop new programs in Alameda and East Oakland. One of my first projects was to complete a needs assessment of environmental education programs in East Oakland. The findings demonstrated deep support and appreciation for wildlife, wilderness and environmental education among predominantly Latino and African American East Oakland community members.

The needs assessment also pointed out that local East Oakland schools faced many barriers to accessing environmental education. These barriers included lack of funding for transportation and science materials, lack of time, and lack of access to knowledge about existing programs (the full text of the needs assessment is available at www.goldengateaudubon.org/EnvironEduc/index.html).

In response, we developed a program that removed these barriers by provid-

ing free buses, offering field trips accessible by public transportation, actively recruiting teachers through person-to-person contact and developing a classroom curriculum that required virtually no equipment or supplies. We developed strong partnerships with the school district, community centers, the East Bay Regional Park District, and a joint collaboration with the Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center.



Amiko Mayeno (front) with volunteers at a community program day

Patti Garcia

Hover Fly mimics a bee to avoid harassment, and learn how they themselves are an interdependent part of this schoolyard ecosystem.

This summer I went with Anna Martinez, a GGAS high school intern, to Arroyo Creek Recreation Center in East Oakland to pilot-test one part of the new schoolyard curriculum. Upon arrival, we found a group of 6- to 11-year-old children huddled around a computer, deeply absorbed in a video game. Timothy Hughes, the Recreation Center leader, told the children in no uncertain terms to turn off the game and give their attention to the "bird lady." I could hear their loud cries of disappointment and took a deep breath. Eventually they all came to the table, looking quite angry and uninterested.

After a brief presentation, we went outside to assess the viability of their yard as hummingbird habitat. They looked for materials a hummingbird might use to build a nest and food sources such as flowers and insects. Before long, they were excitedly pointing out hummingbirds, one of which hovered right above us, looking territorial. Soon we were all down by the creek finding fish and other creatures. As we left, Anna told me she planned to return to the center on her own to volunteer. A 9-year-old boy took my hand and told me he was going to be a scientist when he grew up. As I left, I let the children know they could go back inside if they liked, but they were all too involved in discovering the mysteries of the creek to be bothered with a computer game. At the end of the day I knew why I was still at GGAS years longer than I had ever imagined.

This job has given me an opportunity I did not expect, the opportunity to build a bridge between my passion for social justice and my intense love of nature.

Chapter Wish List: Volunteers Wanted

GGAS volunteers make us one of the Bay Area's leading conservation, environmental education and birding organizations. Please consider joining our large and enthusiastic group of volunteers who do good things and feel great doing them.

Treasurer and Membership Chair

GGAS seeks to fill two important positions on its Board of Directors that were recently vacated—Treasurer and Membership Chair. The Treasurer helps prepare the annual budget and monthly financial statements for the Board, and makes sure our financial bookkeeping is in order. The Membership Chair oversees a committee devoted to member services and recruitment. See the GGAS Web site for details, or call the office if you might be interested in volunteering and want additional information.

Office volunteers

Office volunteers work a three-hour shift once per week during our office hours of Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. The tasks are easy. You'll help us answer the phone and field questions about birds (we have cheat sheets and books to help you answer tough questions so it's a great learning opportunity, and if you can't find the answer no one gets upset). You also will greet people when they come to the office and help with mailings and other office activities in our congenial and uplifting atmosphere.

Help Us Recruit New Members

To be as effective as possible as an advocate for preserving our natural world, GGAS needs as many members as possible. It's time for us to go out and recruit new members and we need your help!



Intern Tim Aguon teaching elementary students about invertabrate life in the mud

Please volunteer to staff a table for us—it's an easy and enjoyable way to help bring in new members. GGAS provides a small table at a hot birding spot that is also a place where people walk just to be outdoors. Possible sites in San Francisco include Golden Gate Park's Stow Lake, and the Cliff House on Ocean Beach; other good locations include the perimeter trail on Alameda's Harbor Bay Isle, Lake Merritt in Oakland, the Albany Bulb and Berkeley's Tilden Park.

At the table we provide binoculars

and a scope with which to watch the birds along with membership and birding information. Your job is to introduce people to the joys of birding and encourage them to join GGAS.

You don't have to be a great birder to do this—your visitors will know less than you do. Two or three hours on a weekend once a month or once every two months is all we ask. Please join our membership recruitment team. Meet nice people, get a little sun (rain cancels) and have a great time bringing the joys of birding to our community.

If you are interested please call the Golden Gate Audubon Society office at 510.843.2222. Thanks!

Become an Environmental Education Volunteer

If you enjoy being with kids and sharing their enthusiasm for the outdoors, then you are a candidate for the GGAS environmental education program. No previous experience is necessary.

Volunteers are trained by GGAS staff and work with a team of naturalists, park rangers and high school student mentors. Activities take place at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline Park in Oakland and the Alameda Wildlife Refuge, as well as in elementary school classrooms and schoolyards in Oakland and Alameda. Classroom visits and field trips are held on weekdays, primarily in the morning hours. Volunteers are required to commit to a minimum of six hours per month.

Here's a wonderful chance to pass on your love of the natural world to children who are experiencing it for the first time. For more information, contact Audubon staff members Patti Garcia at 510.434.1898 or Tsahai Codner at 510.434.1927 or e-mail Tsahai at Tsahai@audubon.org. 

Become a GGAS Supporting Member and Make a Difference Locally

Most people don't realize that the Golden Gate Audubon Society (GGAS) and the National Audubon Society (NAS) are two separate organizations. Although we share a name and have the same mission of conserving our natural world, NAS looks at issues from a national level and leaves it to GGAS to address our local Bay Area issues.

When you join NAS you automatically become a member of GGAS but

almost all of your money goes to NAS. This year, out of your basic \$35 NAS membership only \$2.50 goes to GGAS. If you give NAS more money GGAS still only gets \$2.50.

You do have a choice. You can join GGAS directly and become a GGAS Supporting Member. If you do so, all of your \$20 membership dues go to GGAS, staying here in the Bay Area where it will be used to save our local wetlands, streams and other bird habi-

tats and to support our innovative environmental education programs, our field trips and nature programs.

If you want your Audubon membership dollars to help solve our local Bay Area problems, please use the form below and become a GGAS Supporting Member.

Remember, if you also want to support NAS and its efforts at a national level you can always join both organizations. We thank you for your support. 

Golden Gate Audubon Society Supporting Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

A contribution to Golden Gate Audubon in addition to your membership will provide significant support to our conservation, education and recreation programs.

Membership (Family \$35) (Individual \$20) \$ _____

Yes, I also want to donate \$ _____

Total Amount \$ _____

Please make your check payable to Golden Gate Audubon Society or join by using your credit card:

VISA MasterCard

Your credit card # _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ Credit Card Expiration Date _____ / _____

Mail with this form to:

**Golden Gate Audubon Society
2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G
Berkeley, CA 94702**

Please do not give my name to any other organization

Christmas Bird Counts

Oakland: Sunday, December 15

San Francisco: Friday, December 27

Golden Gate Audubon's two counts, San Francisco and Oakland, are well along in preparation. Join us if you are looking for a healthy, social, environmentally friendly activity for the holiday season. Beginners are always welcome. If you are one of our long-time participants, we look forward to seeing you again.

The Oakland Count is on Sunday, December 15. The Oakland count circle contains a variety of habitats that always produce a good number of species. Bird for the day with a group or be a feeder watcher in the comfort of your own home.

The San Francisco Count is on Friday, December 27. Join a team in one of the San Francisco Peninsula areas for a full day of birding; help for a few hours by covering your neighborhood park or square; be a midday birder for a few hours in downtown San Francisco, or watch in your backyard for as little as 30 minutes.

Both of the counts finish the day with a group dinner which we encourage everyone to attend. Hot, nutritious food and drink at a reasonable price with other birders is reason enough to join us. You also get entertained with stories of the day's birding adventures, some of which are quite amusing. The final countdown of the birds seen and missed is always fun.

Both counts would welcome more participants, so if you're interested but haven't signed up, phone the appropriate contacts listed below. Folks who let us know *early* are *very much appreciated* by the compilers! Neither count will be able to place counters at the last minute. If you have sent in a form but haven't received an assignment yet, you can expect to hear from us soon. We look forward to seeing you in the field and at the count day dinner.

Oakland CBC Contacts: Joelle Buffa & Clyde Morris 510.494.1098

San Francisco CBC Contact: Alan Hopkins 415.664.0983

continued from page 1

other projects.

In announcing the awards, The Clean Water Network wrote: "Wetlands – so crucial for habitat, flood control and pollution reduction – continue to be lost at an alarming rate. ...Thirty years after its passage, we need the Clean Water Act more than ever. And it needs us." We congratulate Arthur on his award, and wish him many more years of wetlands advocacy with GGAS. We need him.* 

*See the GGAS Web site at ggas@goldengateaudubon.org for more information on Arthur's work and the awards.

Donations

Thank you all for your donations to support the many activities of Golden Gate Audubon Society.

Golden Eagle (\$1000 and more)

Anonymous

Peregrine Falcon (\$500-\$1000)

Miles and Mel McKey (stock)

Least Tern (\$200 to \$500)

David Young and Donald Bird (Dog/Park Issues), Susan Groves and Eric Anderson (yard sale proceeds for Education Programs)

Clapper Rail (\$100 to \$200)

Raymond Sukys and Amy J Powell (Dog/Park Issues)

Gifts (to \$100)

Barbara Armstrong, Bernice Biggs, Mary Brezner, Tom Condit, John Conley, Ernest A. Dernburg, MD, Judith Dunham, Michelle Enochson, Kathy Erickson, Satoru Fujii (including a gift subscription), Pat Gannon, Jim and Ruth Gravanis, Derek Heins, Roger James, Robert and Caroline Lichtenstein, Jamie Marantz, Barbara Maynard, Eileen C. Odegaard, Jo Ann Ogden, L. Oppenheim, Emilie Strauss, John Sudall, Mildred M. Twining, Eleanor Visser, Edward F. Walsh, Jr., Marian Whitehead (2), Ellen F. Yamamoto

In-Kind

Richard Cooper (BIRDING CD-ROMs), Nancy Mennel (Color Printer)

Foundation Grants

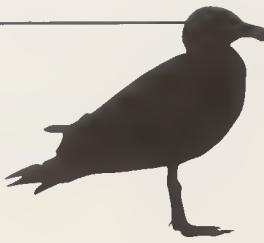
East Bay Regional Park District, \$15,000 for MLK Jr. Regional Shoreline Park Bird Census

National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, \$5,000 for Alameda Education Project

A bequest to the Golden Gate Audubon Society helps make it possible for us to continue the good work we do in helping preserve our natural world for future generations. If you are interested in setting up a bequest, we have a team of experts who will be glad to help you. Please call Arthur Feinstein at our GGAS office for more information. Our phone number is 510.843.2222. Thanks.

OBSERVATIONS

October 1–31, 2002
Jay Withgott



A

utumn birding continued to be rewarding through the month of October, although relatively few mega-rarities were found. As the latter half of the fall passerine migration pushed through, many breeding birds bid us adieu, while early winterers trickled in. Migration was steady, with no particular fallout days. Numbers of eastern warblers were half what they were in September.

Loons to Ducks

Our region's first Red-necked Grebe returned on 26 Oct. off Rodeo Lagoon, MRN (WL). Black-footed Albatrosses numbered 145 on a SJPT at Cordell Bank, MRN, 14 Oct. This trip also reported 2 Flesh-footed Shearwaters among its 5 shearwater species, and 380 Ashy, 1 Black, and 1 Wilson's Storm-Petrel (DSh, TM). Seawatches from land in Oct. produced high counts of 10 Pink-footed, 107 Buller's, and 343 Black-vented Shearwaters from Pigeon Pt., SM, 27 Oct. (RT). As far as we know, no wayward Ashy Storm-Petrels put in PaeBell Park appearances during the World Series, but this species was spotted over the Bay (1 on the 3rd, and 2 on the 4th) from Coyote Pt., SM (RT).

Everyone's favorite Cattle Egret returned to L. Merritt in downtown Oakland, ALA, for another winter, being first reported on the 20th (BM). And an even stranger sight than a Cattle Egret among skyscrapers was the leueistic Turkey Vulture seen several times from Hawk Hill and other spots in southern MRN. A photo of this light-beige vulture is online at www.ggro.org.

The Lake Co. Emperor Goose (*Chen canagica*) continued throughout the

month, as did the male Harlequin Duck at Coyote Pt., SM. Migrant White-fronted Goose flocks were noted on several occasions, and uncommon wintering waterfowl including Eurasian Wigeons, Wood Ducks, and Hooded Mergansers began to trickle in this month. The first Barrow's Goldeneye was reported 29 Oct. at L. Merritt, ALA (BB), an apparent female Tufted Duck was reported from Five Brooks, MRN, on the 26th (BS, oob), and a Long-tailed Duck was at Limantour, PRNS, 15-18 Oct. (LW; JC).

Raptors to Alcids

Hawk Hill, MRN, continued to post good flights this month, including all expected late fall raptors, and a late Broad-winged Hawk on the 29th (TB). At other locales, 3 Broad-wings were reported (CC, 1st, SG; SF, 6th, mob; MRN, 19th, DMe). A Swainson's Hawk flew over San Carlos, SM, on the 19th (RT), and several Ferruginous and Rough-leggeds were seen in the final days of the month in MRN and SM. In San Mateo Co., a **Crested Caracara** (*Caracara cheriway*), possibly the same bird seen reeently in Santa Cruz Co., was reported feeding on roadkill on Hwy 1 just S of Half Moon Bay (LB). That sighting, on 21 Oct., followed a handful of second-hand reports from the Pescadero area in previous weeks. The CBRC has not yet issued judgement on whether this year's spate of Caracara sightings represent wild vagrants or escapees from captivity.

On 2 Oct., a Sandhill Crane flew over Ano Nuevo SR, SM (GS). The month's several Golden Plover sightings included 1 American at Bodega Harbor, SON, 19 Oct. (MP); 2 Americans at PRNS, 13, 14, & 19 Oct. (mob); a Pacific at PRNS, MRN, 12 Oct. (DvN), and a Pacific at

Ano Nuevo SR, SM, 19 Oct. (PM). Golden Plovers unidentified to speies were at Bolinas Lagoon, MRN, 22 Oct. (KH, DL), and the Gazos Cr. mouth, SM, 26 Oct. (AE). Beyond our region, a **Common Greenshank** (*Tringa nebularia*), a yellowlegs relative from Asia, was found at Klopp L., Areata, HUM, on 18 Oct. and seen again the 23rd-24th (PL; mob). Amazingly, this was determined to be a different individual than last year's Greenshank, whieh occurred only 6 miles away — and that bird was the first record for the Lower 48 states. A Solitary Sandpiper was seen 1 Oct. at Castro Reg. RA, ALA (KHi; DB, PB). Single Baird's Sandpipers stayed late at Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS (RS), and Shollenberger Park, SON (JT, oob), both seen on the 24th. Five Peetoral Sandpipers were reported from MRN and SCL (mob). A Stilt Sandpiper was last reported at Alviso on 1 Oct. (ADM).

Two South Polar Skuas, all 3 Jaeger speies, 41 Sabine's Gulls, and a Blaek-legged Kittiwake were on the 14 Oct. SJPT to Cordell Bank, MRN. Reported from shore were all 3 species, including 2 Long-tailed, 4 Pomarine, and numerous Parasities. A Franklin's Gull at the Farallons was a 3rd-ever record for that site, on 11 Oct. (PP). From Pigeon Pt., SM, 6 Common Terns were seen on the 5th, (PG), 2 on the 27th (RT), and a late Caspian on the 19th (PM). Three Xantus's Murrelets and 3 Tufted Puffins were at Cordell Bank on the 14th (SJPT).

Doves to Thrashers

A Chimney Swift was at the Farallon Is., SF, b/w 7-11 Oct. (PP). A phenomenal report was of a Blaek-baeked Woodpecker in Sonoma Co., on 4 Oct. in Jack London SP (MMo) — a very long way from the Sierras, where this speies is uncommon and loeal at best! Only 3 historical records exist for the Coast Ranges, at least 1 of whieh may have been mistaken (SG). No further sightings of the SON bird were reported, unfortunately. Other woodpeckers sightings included 2 Lewis's at Tilden Park, CC, 3 Oct. (SG), and 1 of each of

the 3 unusual Bay-area Sapsuckers: a Williamson's at OPR, MRN, 6 Oct. (LC); a Red-naped in Portola Valley, SM, 9 Oct. (PM); and a Yellow-bellied at San Bruno Mt. Park, SM, 8-19 Oct. (RT; AE, DA).

A Least Flycatcher was at OPR, MRN, on the 8th (RS), and Hammond's Flycatchers were at the same site on the 6th (LH), and at East Wash, SF, on the 2nd (HC). Four Tropical Kingbirds were reported, along with 2 Kingbird sp. likely Tropicals, during the month, from MRN, SF, SM, & SON.

A Plumbeous Vireo was at OPR, MRN, on 8 Oct. (RS); a Philadelphia was reported from Coyote Hills RP, ALA, 4 Oct. (PG); and single Red-eyed Vireos were at Ano Nuevo SR 30 Sept. (GS) and SE Farallon Is. 7-11 Oct. (PP). A Townsend's Solitaire wandered coastward to Mt. Davidson, SF, on 2 Oct. (PS, SR), and another continued to the Farallons, 7-11 Oct. (PP). A Phainopepla was in SF on the 7th (BF), and a japonicus-subspecies American Pipit on the Farallons on the 11th (PP).

Wood Warblers to Finches

Birders in our region reported 21 warbler species during October, half of them vagrants from eastern North America (see chart). Numbers of individuals of rare warblers were half of September's total.

A Summer Tanager was at Sutro Hts Park, SF, 13 Oct. (HC), a Blue Grosbeak continued at Stevens Creek, SCL, on the 1st (VT), and a Lazuli Bunting was late on the 6th at Pilarcitos Cr., SM (DS, RT).

Sparrows always pour in from the north in October, with the occasional White-throat among the thousands of White-crowns and Golden-crowns. Reports of an American Tree Sparrow came from two locations at OPR, MRN, 8-9 Oct. (RS; ES) and 26-27 Oct. (CL; MH); no word on whether these were confirmed to be different birds. Eight Clay-colored Sparrows were found in the region this month, from ALA, MRN, SF, & SM. A Brewer's Sparrow was at Half Moon Bay, SM, on the 13th (RT), while a Swamp Sparrow was at SE Farallon Is. 7-11 Oct.

Wood Warbler Sightings

Golden-winged Warbler			
1 bird, 1-3 Oct.	Nunes Ranch, OPR, MRN	JR, DnN, AW	
Tennessee Warbler			
1 bird, 19 Oct.	Muir Beach, MRN	DMc	
Nashville Warbler			
3 birds	SCL, SF	mob	
Chestnut-sided Warbler			
10 birds	MRN, SCL, SF, SM	mob	
Magnolia Warbler			
4 birds	SF	GM, PP, PS, RF; oob	
Black-throated Green Warbler			
1 bird, 19 Oct.	Lobos Dunes, SF	PS	
Blackburnian Warbler			
1 bird, 7-11 Oct.	Farallon Is., SF	PP	
Prairie Warbler			
2 birds, 19-21, 26 Oct.	MRN, SON	WL, DW; oob	
Palm Warbler			
20 birds	ALA, MRN, SF, SM, SON	mob	
Blackpoll Warbler			
9 birds	MRN, SCL, SF, SM	mob	
Black-and-white Warbler			
2 birds, 7,12 Oct.	SCL	BA, BR	
American Redstart			
4 birds	MRN, SF, SM	ES, LC, PP, DSi	
Canada Warbler			
1 bird, 27 Oct.	Pescadero, SM	RT	

Abbreviations for Observers: BA, Brian Acord, DA, David Armstrong; BB, Bob Brandiff, DB, Dennis Braddy, LB, Lucas Brug, PB, Patricia Braddy; TB, Tim Behr; JC, Josiah Clark, HC, Hugh Cotter, LC, Les Chibana; ADM, Al DeMartini; AE, Al Eisner; BF, Brian Fitch, RF, Rich Ferrick; PG, Phil Gordon; SG, Steve Glover; KH, Keith Hansen; KHi, Kevin Hints; LH, Lisa Hug, MH, Merry Haveman; AJ, Alvaro Jaramillo; DK, Dan Keller, CL, Cindy Lieurance; DL, David Lukas, PL, Paul Lohse; RL, Randy Little; WL, William Legg; BM, Bruce Mast; DMc, Dave McKenzie; GM, Gloria Markowitz; MMA, Michael Mammoser; MMo, Mark Morrisette; PM, Peter Metropulos; TM, Todd McGrath; DnN, Dan Nelson; DvN, David Nelson; EP, Enc Preston; MP, Mike Parmeter; PP, Peter Pyle; BR, Bob Reiling; JR, Jean Richmond; SR, Siobhan Ruck; BS, Byron Stone; DSi, Dan Singer; DSh, Debi Shearwater; ES, Emilie Strauss; GS, Gary Strachan; PS, Paul Saraceni; RS, Rich Stallcup; JT, Judy Tooher; RT, Ronald S. Thorn; VT, Vivek Tiwari; AW, Alan Wight; DW, Denise Wight; LW, Leigh Woodson.

Semicolons separate original observer(s) from subsequent observer(s). Abbreviation "mob" = many observers; "oob" = other observers. Information is compiled from BirdBox transcripts and regional listservs; the author apologizes for any errors or omissions.

Abbreviations for Counties and Others: ALA, Alameda; CBRC, California Bird Records Committee; CC, Contra Costa; Co., County; Cr., Creek; HUM, Humboldt; L., Lake; MRN, Marin; OPR, Outer Pt. Reyes; PRNS, Pt. Reyes National Seashore; RP, Regional Park; SCL, Santa Clara; SF, San Francisco; SJPT, Shearwater Journeys pelagic trip; SM, San Mateo; SON, Sonoma; SP, State Park; SR, State Reserve.

(PP). Of Dark-eyed Juncos, 1 "Pink-sided" and 4 "Slate-colored" individuals were reported (RS, PP, RT, BR, CL).

A handful of Longspurs, those winter denizens of barren fields, also showed up this month. Two Lapland Longspurs were at North Beach turnoff, PRNS, MRN, 6-13 Oct. (RS; oob); I flew over Wavecrest Rd., SM, 11 Oct. (AJ); I was at Pillar Pt., SM, 27 Oct. (EP); and 1 provided good looks from the 26th on at Bayfront Park, SM (DK; mob). With the Laplands at PRNS was a Chestnut-collared Longspur (RS, oob).

Pt. Reyes' North Beach turnoff was also the sole spot for Bobolink this month, with

2 birds there on the 6th-7th (LC, DvN). A Yellow-headed Blackbird at Calero Res., SCL, 27-29 Oct., was the county's latest fall record (MMA, mob). An Orchard Oriole lingered at OPR, MRN on the 3rd (DnN), and another was at Montara, SM, on the 6th (AJ). Exceptionally late were 2 Hooded Orioles visiting RL's Milpitas, SCL, feeder, 17-18 Oct.

Scattered Lawrence's Goldfinches returned to SCL locales, and a Cassin's Finch stopped briefly at Mt. Davidson, SF, on the 21st (PS). Evening Grosbeaks, 3 each, were seen at Hawk Hill, MRN, on the 25th (JC), and at Phipps Ranch, SM, on the 27th (RT). 

GGAS 2003 Election

The GGAS annual election will be held by mail ballot due April 17, 2003.

The GGAS Board of Directors includes (1) the elected Officers, (2) up to six Directors elected for staggered 3-year terms (our East and West Bay Directors), (3) one "at-large" Director (if designated by the Board), and (4) the Chairs of Standing Committees (appointed by the President each year with the approval of a majority of the elected Officers and Directors). The GGAS President serves for two years and other Officers for one year. The current President, Miles McKey, is in the first year of his term.

The following positions may be filled in the 2003 election: President-Elect and First Vice President [combined position], Second Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, East Bay Director (2003-2006), West Bay Director (2003-2004) [one year remaining of a 3-year term], and West Bay Director (2003-2006).

Members may nominate candidates to be included on the ballot by complying with the following rules: (1) The nominee must agree to serve and his or her candidacy must be supported by the signatures of at least 10 GGAS members in good standing; and (2) the nomination, with the required signatures, must be received by the Chair of the GGAS Board of Directors Nominating Committee by January 23, 2003.

The Nominating Committee members are: Nancy Smith—Chair, Arthur Feinstein, Dana Kokubun and Leslie Lethridge. Correspondence to any of them should be sent in care of the GGAS office in Berkeley.

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As a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically enrolled in the local chapter, Golden Gate Audubon Society. Chapter benefits include receipt of *The Gull*, access to field trips and programs, and the opportunity to volunteer. Call the office if you have any questions.

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